

Co-Chairs Holvey and Girod, and members of the committee, for the record, I'm Zach Hudson and I serve House District 49, which includes Troutdale, Fairview, Wood Village, North Gresham and East Portland. HD 49 is largely contiguous with Reynolds School District, and I previously taught at Reynolds High School.

I come to you with a funding request for the Reynolds School-Based Health Center. As you will hear, Reynolds initially secured this funding in lottery dollars in 2019 and moved forward with the project, only to be set back by the Covid-19 crisis when that promise of funds was rescinded in the summer of 2020 - three months after construction was completed. Now, Reynolds is asking for funding they thought they had received two years ago, which they will use to reimburse their general fund for the cost of construction that the district fronted. That reimbursement is \$2.3 million dollars that the district can put back into our classrooms via programming and supports for students.

To explain why this money is important to my community, I would like to tell you a little bit about my district. Firstly, much of my district is not wealthy. Wood Village, which is served by Reynolds school district, has the highest percentage of families and people living in poverty relative to its population in Multnomah county, and over half the students at Reynolds High are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. I know it is easy to paint the greater Portland area with a broad brush, but I encourage you to see the nuances. My district includes a lot of working families who are struggling to make ends meet, and for whom health care costs are a burden.

Additionally, Reynolds High School is one of the most diverse high schools in Oregon. According to the Oregon Department of Education's 2019-2020's Adapted School and District Profiles, forty-four percent of Reynolds' student body is Latino or Hispanic. Sixty-nine percent of students are Black, Indigenous or People of Color. As a teacher, I appreciated the range of lived experiences that my students brought to the classroom. I also know that many of these students will face systemic oppression and racism. Statistically, many are likely to struggle to receive the health care they need. A school-based health center ensures that every student gets care: the center is conveniently located on the school campus, and care is provided regardless of the ability to pay.

I see Reynolds SBHC as a critical step to help every student be successful and to provide low-cost care to those who need it. I'm proud that we're able to offer this service to our students and in this - of all years - the ability to meet the health needs of our students shouldn't come with a price tag that takes dollars out of the classroom. Thank you for your consideration.